

Message Text

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S/S:MR. SEBASTIAN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 006174

NODIS

FOR AMB. SCRANTON-USUN, FOR RAY SEITZ-LONDON

FOL RPT LUSAKA 0064 ACTION SECSTATE 10 JAN QUOTE

S E C R E T LUSAKA 0064

NODIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR RH ZA

SUBJ: RICHARD MEETING WITH NKOMO WND MUGABE

1. RICHARD AND HIS GROUP MET WITH A LARGE DELEGATION FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT ON MONDAY MORNING JANUARY 10 AT THE REVIDENCE OF THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER. RICHARD OUTLINED HIS PROPOSALS IN GENERAL TERMS AS HE HAD IN THE PAST AND ASKED FOR THE PF'S REACTIONS. THEY REQUESTED A PAPER ON THE PROPOSALS AND THEN ASKED FOR A SHORT ADJOURNMENT WHILE THEY CONSIDERED AN INITIAL RESPONSE.

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2. WHEN THEY RETURNED MUGABE ACTED AS SPOKESMAN. HE STARTED OFF BY REJECTING THE PROPOSALS OUT OF HAND AND STATING THAT THE PF STOOD BY ITS INITIAL PROPOSALS. THEN HE WENT INTO A LENGTHY LECTURE ON THEIR OPPOSITION TO RACIALISM. THERE WOULD BE NO GOVT, HE SAID, WHICH WAS BLACK OR WHITE. THERE COULD BE INDIVIDUALS

REPRESENTING VARIOUS PARTIES OR GROUPS BUT THEY SHOULD NOT BE DISTINGUISHED BY RACE. WHEN RICHARD RESPONDED THAT HE FELT THEN THAT HIS WAS THE END OF THE CONFERENCE AND THAT THEY MIGHT AS WELL CALL IT OFF AND GO HOME, THE FRONT MEMBERS MODIFIED THEIR POSITION SOMEWHAT. NKOMO EXPLAINED THAT THEY WERE TALKING MERELY OF LABELS AND THAT THE MATTER OF HOW YOU REFERRED TO THOSE WHO MADE UP THE GOVERNMENT COULD BE EASILY TAKEN CARE OF. MUGABE INSISTED THAT THEY WOULD NOT NEGOTIATE WITH VORSTER OR SMITH BUT ONLY WITH THE BRITISH.

3. IT WAS AGREED THAT RICHARD AND HIS GROUP WOULD MEET AGAIN WITH THE PF IN MAPUTO ON SUNDAY.

4. COMMENT: THE BRITISH DESCRIBED THE MEETING AS PURE FARCE AND PLAY ACTING. THEY DO NOT BELIEVE THAT MUGABE WAS SERIOUS IMEREJECTING THE PROPOSALS. ON THE OTHER HAND THEY ARE NOT CONVINCED THAT THE PF IS REALLY PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE AS KAUNDA ASSURED THEM AND CHONA TOLD ME LATER IN THE DAY IT WOULD. WHILE NKOMO SPOKE AT LENGTH AND HIGHLY EMOTIONALLY, WHAT HE HAD TO SAY HAD LITTLE MEANING AND HE SHOWED LITTLE CONTROL OVER THE GROUP. AT THE MOMENT THEY FEEL HE SEEMS TO BE GOING ALONG WITH IT AND HAS NOT ASSERTED HIMSELF. THE PF IS UNDOUBTEDLY FEELING EXHILARATED BY ITS RECOGNITION BY THE FRONTLINE AND PROBABLE FUTURE ENDORSEMENT BY THE OAU. IT HAS GIVEN NO INDICATION OF HAVING FACED UP TO THE PROBLEM OF WHETHER IT IS REALLY WILLING TO NEGOTIATE WITH SMITH OR NOT.

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5. DEPT PLEASE PASS NAIROBI AND DAR FOR EDMONDSON. LOW

UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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